

Taiwan's Night Markets: Battlefield of Identity

A Case Study Approach

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Introduction

During my stay in Taiwan from September 2011 to June 2012 I witnessed first hand the changes occurring in one of Taiwan's newest and, at the time, most prominent night markets, the Shida Night Market. I witnessed how the restaurants in certain parts of the night market were being closed down despite of protests being held by shop owners and students at Taipei City Hall. I wondered how the various actors in this dispute were attracting attention to their side of the argument, and how this affected the outcome of events at various points in time.

When looking at the importance of night markets for Taiwan's tourism and economy, legitimizing the closing down of such an area is important. Besides these reasons people also attach a value to night markets that can only be described as cultural significance. The cases in this paper will show how night markets are placed squarely in the debate on the meaning of culture, and what culture in a modern city should look like.

The government is one actor that has a definite say in this debate. Taiwan's government is aware of the importance of night markets, even giving night markets an own page on Taiwan's official Tourism Bureau website, which falls directly under the Executive Yuan, the executive branch of the Government of the Republic of China (ROC). On this page the most important night markets in Taiwan are introduced, as well as being framed as places where "the importance of food culture in the lives of Taiwanese people" is emphasized (Tourism Bureau, Republic of China 2013). I use this example to make clear that the government frames night markets as a crucial part of Taiwan's culture, not only to locals, but also especially to foreigners visiting Taiwan. In the Shida case however, the government website is also an indicator of how the official sentiment towards night markets can shift. The Shida Night Market was promoted as a must-visit destination on this website before late 2011, but was then removed from this website at the peak of the conflict. As an important actor in the decision-making process, having such a contradictory view at times makes those who rely on night markets for income and those who live in close proximity to night markets uneasy.

Furthermore, this emphasis on the importance of night markets in Taiwan by the government has led to foreigners echoing this view. In one such book by Jordan, et al. (2004), they write in the preface that their goal "has been to touch a wide range of different aspects of everyday life to ask the question what it means to be Taiwanese." One of the chapters in this book is solely devoted to Taiwan's night market culture, putting it on equal footing with other subjects like religion, which also get a chapter (Yu 2004). In this chapter Yu (2004) even goes

so far as to frame night markets as part of Taiwanese identity in general, which is also an aspect this thesis will further explore.

Taiwan specifically is an interesting case because it is one of the most dynamic environments in the region, with rapid social development over the last decade alone. Night markets are particularly interesting due to the various ways in which their presence can be interpreted, as can be seen from the government view above alone. The plurality of public attitudes as well as the ease with which these can be found make it another ideal project for research. Furthermore, looking at framing attempts can be particularly valuable to find a larger trend in the shifting definition of culture and nationalism throughout the country.

By viewing two cases that turned out differently, this paper hopes to question how framing was used to put pressure on the city and national government, and what kind of framing was used to find greater resonance with a larger audience in Taiwan. As both sides are trying to promote the protection of culture, describing the way in which they frame their definitions of culture will also provide this paper with a way to see what both sides their ideal city looks like. Practically speaking, the question this thesis hopes to answer is: How was resonance gained in framing attempts made in these cases, and what do the areas of discourse that led to this resonance tell us about Taiwanese society in general?

In order to answer this double question, this paper will be structured as follows: After the introduction this paper will start with a chapter on theoretical background. That chapter will explain what framing is, how framing works, and how it is related to identity formation. This theoretical background chapter will make way for a short introduction of the Taiwanese night markets. I will further examine the night market phenomenon to define the significance of these markets in the eyes of the Taiwanese government, and of the people living and working there. In this section I will move towards the present and research how night markets have changed in recent times, and what problems have arisen.

In the case study chapter of this paper I will introduce both cases separately. In the Shida case a timeline of events incorporating online news articles related to this case will be set up as a starting point, whereas in the Shilin case only the general background of the case will be given. Subchapters in the Shida case study will divide the timeline further to highlight the changes in attitude by media and people due to framing. In the Shida case, blogs maintained by both sides will be used to see what kind of direct attempts at framing there were, and coupled with the news coverage given in the timeline a shift in perception can be recorded.

A chapter titled frame resonance, following on the case study, will define what the individual frames were, will make clear exactly how the framing attempts found resonance, explain what this resonance was in all frames and why it was strong. The discussion chapter following on this chapter will highlight how framing was not only used as a way to pressure actors for short term gains in both cases, but how it also added to the ongoing debate of how a nation's culture is defined, and how this is related to nationalism. It will link the findings in the resonance chapter to the theoretical background chapter to form a more comprehensive idea of how framing and identity influence one another and are also a part of defining the nation. This chapter will show how resonance is contextually gained by using past experience as well as referring to current structural problems the people of Taiwan feel that they are facing.

And finally this paper will conclude with a brief summary of the findings in the paper, as well as lay out implications of the identity shifts that occurred during these two cases. The conclusion will also offer discussion to possible future research.

1. Theoretical Background: Framing and case studies

In this paper I will use the concept of framing to explain how social groups that are positioned outside of the government can gain, and in one of the case studies in this paper have gained, a foothold in forming official discourse. In order to best view the pressure from, and power of framing, I will show how the lack of framing in one case, and obvious use of framing in the other supported different outcomes. Naturally, in both cases there are many factors that caused these different outcomes. For one, in the Shilin case it was clear from the start that it was just a relocation project, so the vendors would not actually lose their jobs. In the Shida case vendors lost their businesses, making the finding of a solution more necessary and immediate. Besides this reason, there are also other factors including zoning rules that differentiate these two cases, but due to limited space this paper will focus primarily on framing.

I examine these two night market cases in part also because they represent a division in the definition of culture, and as a result a division in how the identity of Taiwan is perceived and shaped. Although both cases are quite different in terms of how events were framed, they both represent a clash of interests between various actors as well as a clash of ideals. These two cases are the aforementioned Shida Night Market controversy that started in late 2011, with the other being the partial relocation of Taipei's most famous night market, Shilin Night Market, between 2006 and 2011. In the Shida case I will show how framing of events brought this case into the spotlight, and helped promote the desired city images each side wanted to achieve at various points in the conflict. This paper will focus on the Shida Night Market case because the attempt at framing is much more apparent there, contributing to the case still not being closed. In the Shilin case there is less of a dispute, because the attempts at framing by the government were more successful, leading to less resistance from the public. Therefore, this paper will first discuss the Shilin case as an introduction to the power of framing when it is one-sided, and then move on to the Shida case with a more in depth analysis of a case with multiple frames. A discussion of the findings will also show what this framing says about culture and identity, and how the nation and people's perception of nationalism is shaped. I will not claim that both cases are so alike that the example of framing in one case is applicable to the other. However, this paper does seek to show how pressure through framing can change discourse in a social issue, and the lack of a proper counter-frame against any action by the government can lead to the relatively unchallenged outcome, such as was the case in the Shilin Night Market.

First, to explain how frames work we must first give a good definition of the concept. Many analysts have done research to the usage and definition of framing, and although they find various ways in which the concept can be explained it is safe to say that framing is usually at the very least seen as “the content and borders of political discourse” (Gitlin 1980; Snow et al. 1986; Gamson 1988; Ryan 1991). The content refers to what the maker of the frame wishes to include or exclude from his or her message. Resulting from this, the borders of a frame are defined as the selection of what is included in the frame. As Todd Gitlin says: "Frames are principles of selection, emphasis and presentation composed of little tacit theories about what exists, what happens, and what matters" (1980, 8). Framing can be used by politicians, media, social movements etc., to tell their side of a story through a specific lens, thus not excluding truth, but interpreting it in a certain way.

As for the usage of framing, we can again use the words of Todd Gitlin: “Frames, largely unspoken and unacknowledged, organize the world both for journalists who report it and, in some important degree, for us who rely on their reports” (1980, 7). This guideline to framing from 1980 is still correct, but must be amended to include the internet, a new medium which has made it possible for social groups to have the same influence that media has. In the case of this paper, this addition is quite important because all framing attempts are gathered from blogs. I also believe that all actors with enough power to influence an audience are capable of framing, and also have the power to influence the media and put pressure on the government if their frames are popular and viable enough. However, discourse and public opinion is not the same thing, and this paper recognizes that by keeping them separate, causal assumptions are avoided. Framing attempts do not directly cause changes in government policy, but do have the power to pressure actors to take action, so have indirect power. Framing is part of the process by which actors construct meaning, and this meaning turns into public opinion which is one of the voices a government in a democracy listens to when making decisions.

The influence of framing is best explained by using the words of Nelson, Clawson and Oxley, who state that “frames influence opinions by stressing specific values, facts, and other considerations, endowing them with greater apparent relevance to the issue than they might appear to have under an alternative frame” (1997, 569). This means that not only are certain aspects of a situation highlighted in order to increase their accessibility for viewers, these aspects are also placed within a larger picture of issues that makes them more applicable elsewhere. Strong frames are thus accessible, meaning that people must be able to relate a

frame to their own life experiences, and also steer the weight that multiple considerations in a situation receive in relation to one another.

Relating to the viability of frames, there are two aspects that decide how successful a framing attempt will be. One is the narrative fidelity, or congruence of a frame with the life experience of its addressees (Gamson and Modigliani 1989, 5; Oberschall 1996, 99). Simply said, this is a framing attempt that resonates with what the audience of the frame feel to be true. For instance, the many blog posts by the Shidhood Association talking about the noise in the neighborhood would find a ready ear with the residents in the area because this is the experience they feel they are going through (shidhood 2012, February 25). This is one of the examples that I will further elaborate on in the case study chapter of this paper.

The second aspect that decides success has to do with the empirical credibility of the frame. Even if individuals cannot directly relate a frame to their personal experiences, empirical credibility, or linking the frame to the experiences of readers (in this case), plays a major role in the acceptance of a frame (d'Anjou 1996, 56). Note that empirical credibility does not make any claims to a grand truth, but rather finds truth in what the readers of a framing attempt perceive to be true in their lives. While narrative fidelity deals with what people feel to be true, empirical credibility deals with what people can see, and thus perceive as true. An example in the Shida case would be the clever use of pictures by the Shidhood Association to show how a public park in the area was always filled with rubbish in the morning due to partygoers hanging out in the park against the wishes of residents (shidhood 2012, May 10). Because these pictures and the accompanying text frame events in a way that is deemed true by the audience of the frame it gains strength.

This paper also differentiates between movement-specific collective action frames, and master frames. The first are applicable only to a specific case, and can thus have an influence on viewers interested in that specific case. Master frames are broader in scope, and can be used in many cases, making them more powerful with regards to conveying narrative fidelity and empirical credibility, as well as increasing the public such a frame can influence (Benford and Snow 2000, 619). In this paper there are two master frames that are used during the Shida Night Market controversy, and they both have to do with protecting culture using a different definition. Because the definition of culture and tradition can vary, so can the use of framing. These two frames are also powerful because culture is closely related to identity, which is something that people feel they share, creating an imagined community and giving the frame larger resonance. This gives the frame a strong narrative fidelity, and by tapping into this feeling the issue gained national attention for some time. Both framing types are

capable of aligning the actor attempting to frame an event, and the recipient of the information from the framing attempt. However, in the Shida case described by this paper, the alignment described above, which can be seen as successful use of framing, was achieved to greater degree in the periods with a master frame. This is due to the higher amount of people that see the frame as empirically credible and accept the narrative fidelity of the frame.

The way in which framing is described in this paper is thus also related to meaning construction, and how framing can contribute to the definition of a situation (Gamson and Modigliani 1989). This fits into the constructionist school of thought within framing research. Associations between an issue and a broader phenomenon, in this case culture, can suggest new perspectives that change our perception of reality (Van Gorp and Vercauysse 2012, 1275). Looking at these framing attempts using culture can thus open up room for a broader discussion of Taiwanese identity in general.

This is in turn linked to nationalism. Kai Nielsen sees culture as an inherent part of nationalism, as nationalism is not just about politics (1999, 127). If this view is accepted, according to Nielsen, “cultural nationalism defines the nation in terms of a common encompassing culture. The aim of a nationalist movement is to protect, and beyond that, if it can, to insure the flourishing of the culture of the nation that that nationalist movement represents” (1999, 125). Placing this definition within the context of this paper, it becomes clear that there are two groups in the Shida case that have a different view of the nation and its culture. These images of the nation resonate with larger audiences, giving the framing attempts incorporating these sentiments high narrative fidelity. The audiences that respond positively to a frame feel that they are part of the nation proposed in the frame, and are thus part of an imagined community, as defined by Benedict Anderson in 1983. He stated then that groups with a similar idea of nationalism are imagined because the members of the group will not personally know most of their fellow-members, yet they still live in a nation that they perceive in a similar way (Anderson 1983, 49). The link between the case studies, identity formation and nationalism will become clearer during the case study chapter of this paper, and will be explained further in the discussion chapter of this paper.

Lastly, I would also like to take a double suggestion made by Yih-jye Hwang in an article from 2006 in which he says that those researching Taiwanese identity should “first illustrate the process of how and through which social practices, specific narratives/discourses/interpretations take precedence over other alternatives; and secondly, elucidate how historical narrative is used to help constitute Taiwanese identity” (2006, 128). This article will build on these two suggestions by looking at how the two cases below see framing

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influence discourse on culture and identity, and also how current identity formation is linked with an image of how Taipei (and possibly Taiwan) should look based on the past and present.

2. Taiwan's night markets

After the explanation of theoretical background used in this paper, I would first like to take a step back and explain why night markets are not only a recent example of framing, making them a convenient phenomenon for this study, but are also interesting due to their positioning in Taiwanese culture. Understanding the importance of night markets is necessary to understand how the master frames in the Shida case became prominent. Deepening our understanding of night markets as a phenomenon can also help explain the reason behind, and success and failure of the framing attempts.

According to the Taiwanese government, night markets can be defined as following: “Markets that offer a wide variety of authentic Taiwanese food and drink as well as unique Taiwanese products. They are both practical and inexpensive, and play an important part in the lives of Taiwanese people” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2012). I would like to add that most night markets now also include vendors selling clothing and appliances of many sorts. The night markets I visited during my stay were social meeting points for people of all ages, and Shida Night Market was particularly popular amongst university students from the nearby National Taiwan Normal University (from hereon NTNU), which also gave the market its name. Night markets in general are extremely crowded areas usually located in narrow alleys making them extremely busy during peak hours until closing, which is usually around midnight.

2.1 Problems with night markets

The previous section has shown that night markets are culturally and economically important, but there is also resistance to night markets due to the changes in living environment night markets bring about. The title of the chapter about night markets in the aforementioned book by Jordan, Morris and Moskowitz is important to take note of in this regard. The chapter is called “Hot and Noisy: Taiwan's Night Market Culture” (Yu 2004). It is specifically the hot and noisy part I would like to address. Hot and noisy is a translation of the Chinese phrase *renao* (熱鬧), which in the Chinese language carries a distinctly positive connotation, and could also be translated to mean “lively.” However, the English translation, hot and noisy, does not sound positive. It seems that there are now more and more people, especially those living above the shops that do not appreciate the smells and noise caused by restaurants, food stalls, and bustling crowds walking below their windows, and would thus tend to agree that hot and noisy are not two aspects of life they will take for granted. These

people would describe the night markets as being *luan* (亂) or chaotic, and would much rather prefer their neighborhoods to be quiet and orderly (Yu 2004, 139). Yu also researched that as Taiwan has modernized over the period of the last few decades, night market activity has come under increasing criticism for being backward and embodying the appearance of poverty (2004, 132).

Besides this problem, night markets have also expanded rapidly over the last few decades, and are increasingly infringing on territory originally meant solely for residential housing. This has caused friction between residents who see their quiet neighborhoods slowly being eroded by the bustling atmosphere of the night markets, and shop owners who seek to expand their businesses and attract customers. The two cases in the next chapter will further explore this problem. Furthermore, because of the long history of many night markets, and their traditional structure, many shops do not strictly follow building regulations, but due to vague rules and partial implementation many night markets have been open and running for many years without having these problems addressed. The same goes for Shida Night Market. There are laws regulating the amount of noise that can be made after hours, as well as the amount of space that should be left free on roads for safety, but both rules are rather ambiguous, and have never been strictly enforced by the local government. This has led to a structural problem that is especially apparent in night markets, placing them in a legally grey area. This is also the reason it is fairly easy for the government to target night markets when necessary because they are to some degree breaking the law, and thus have a weak legal position.

The status of night markets as important tourist sites and economic focal points has also caused contradictory reactions from the government, with the Taiwan Tourism Bureau on the one hand promoting tours that visit night markets, as well as presenting various lists on their official website listing famous individual night markets and their cultural value (Tourism Bureau, Republic of China 2013). However, at the same time the city government is trying to halt the expansion of night markets and structure them in ways that may harm the tourism they are trying to promote (“Hau says no further expansion” 2011). This is an ongoing dilemma that the government is visibly struggling with. It has to find a way to make the night markets more law abiding and thus increase their safety and structure without destroying the characteristically back-alley look that makes night markets so popular to tourists and locals alike. It is precisely the handling of this dilemma by the government that has created the two cases I will research in the following chapter of this paper.

3. Case studies

In this chapter I will use the framework created in the previous chapters, and take two specific cases that have worked out differently but both show how modernization is handled when faced with the cultural dilemma presented by night markets. As mentioned before, I will look at two specific cases of night markets in Taipei that have changed during the last ten years due to modernization reasons. These two night markets are Shilin Night Market and Shida Night Market. Shilin is one of Taiwan's most famous night markets, and one of the biggest. Shida Night Market's rise to popularity is more recent, but it has quickly expanded over the last thirty years due to its close proximity to one of Taipei's largest universities (NTNU), making it a place frequented by students and locals alike.

With both cases I will first elaborate on their respective histories insofar as this is relevant to this paper. After this brief introduction I will give a timeline of events surrounding the changes both night markets underwent using online newspaper articles. This part will not be a summary of events, or a point-by-point analysis of grievances in these two cases, but more a way to show how matters unfolded in both cases. As I said before, the Shilin case will be a relatively short section due to the lack of a strong counter-frame in that case. This was different for the Shida case, in which there were multiple actors framing events in certain ways. In order to best examine these framing attempts I have augmented the timeline with blog posts from two blogs run directly by two opposing groups in the conflict. I will use both the blogs and the reactions they invoked in online news articles to see how the pressure of framing influenced the media, and possibly government policy.

I will start with the Shilin Night Market case, not only because it is shorter, but also because it can serve as a comparison with the Shida case in terms of framing attempts. Both cases are also instances of the same changing idea of culture, which is another aspect that will be examined in the discussion chapter of this paper.

3.1 The Shilin Night Market case

Shilin Night Market, widely considered to be Taipei's largest and most popular night market, witnessed a renovation plan for the building the night market was located in between 2002 and 2011. During this time, the vendors that had been located at the old site were moved to a temporary location that would later be vacated after the renovation was done to make room for a new arts center. Unlike the Shida Night Market, which is dealt with in more detail below, this night market was never facing closure, so people's individual livelihoods were not

threatened to the same degree. This may also be one of the reasons no strong framing attempt was made to influence the project between 2002 and 2008. The reason given by the government for the relocation and renovation of the old building seemed to be accepted during this time. The government proposed this project as a way of improving sanitation in the night market, and this reasoning seemed to be commonly accepted, even by the Taipei Times, a newspaper that is often critical of projects proposed by the KMT government (Shu 2008, 1).

However, the eventual outcome of the renovation and return to the old site reshaped the night market as well. The new way in which the night market was structured after its reopening in 2011 suggests that the city government may have also been planning to change the outward appearance of the night market to appear more modern while at the same time trying to make it appear traditional. Most of the food vendors that used to be located outside were moved into the basement of the new building, giving the night market the appearance of a food court, not unlike the one below Taipei's tallest building, Taipei 101, according to some (Mo 2011). However, the renovation of the night market was framed by the government as a way to protect night market culture, and the building of the new arts center was a way to promote culture. These projects, one promoting tradition, and one promoting modernization were both placed under the common denominator of culture, making them both accepted as necessary and legitimate by the general public (Mo 2009).

The attitude towards the renovation of the night market only changed in 2011, when the government was getting ready to reopen the night market. Some concerns were raised about how the atmosphere inside the night market would change if most of the food stalls were relocated in the basement of the renovated building ("EDITORIAL: Myth of market modernization" 2011, May 23). Furthermore, the project was compared to another controversial project concerning a night market, Jiancheng Circle, which saw a similar renovation leading to its eventual closure in 2006 (ibid.). However, at this point the renovation of the building was well under way, and protesting against this location would not change the fact that these vendors needed to make a living, so the new location was accepted.

This did not change the growing feeling in the media that Taipei City Mayor Hau Lung-bin and his predecessor, President Ma Ying-jeou were targeting various night markets and proposing projects to restructure these sites to become more modern (Yao 2011). The new location did eventually reopen on December 25, 2011, and the 94 food vendors who had moved to the temporary location returned to the renovated building without significant protesting (Mo 2011).

It was only later, in 2012 with the rise of the Shida Night Market controversy that the changes made in the Shilin night market were framed in a way that enhanced the arguments made in the Shida case. The Shilin case was used to show that the authenticity of night markets was being harmed, and that little attention was being paid to the results of restructuring the night market (“EDITORIAL: Keeping night markets” 2012). At the same time the night markets were being used in the same breath as urban redevelopment as a way to question this policy. The Shida Night Market case brought about this framing attempt, and the Shilin case thus became part of framing the Shida case, as will be shown below.

3.2 The Shida Night Market case

The second case this paper will address is the Shida Night Market case. Unlike the Shilin Night Market case described above, this case does not have a definitive ending because the conflict of interests is still ongoing. First I will again give a short introduction to this night market in order to understand where the problems that have sprung into existence originated. Then I will show how the night market dispute has been framed differently at various points in the timeline, as well as the results of this framing. This chapter will be further divided into five parts, starting with a period in which both blogs did not exist. This is followed by a period in which the Shidahood Association’s framing attempts gained the greatest resonance, a transition period, a period in which the Don’t Kill Shida blog’s framing attempts gained the greatest resonance, and finally the ongoing status quo as fourth period. This division is based on four frames that this paper distinguishes between. This chapter will gradually show what these frames were, as well as when they appeared. Chapter four will further elaborate on the resonance of the frames.

3.2.1 History of the Shida Night Market controversy

Going back into history, this night market has existed in the area since the 1960s, and was founded by Mainland immigrants that came to Taiwan with the KMT. These people moved into the area that is now known as the Shida Night Market, but was called Longquan Night Market, which is also the name that is being brought back to the area as a direct result of the dispute. During this period the Taipei city government tried to bring order into the district by knocking down illegal buildings in the area, and constructing Shida Road in 1967 (Yang 2012). Vendors and mobile stall peddlers returned to the region however, although many storeowners moved to more secure locations in other night markets.

In 1987, also due to urban planning, the park that now sits by Shida Road was built. This is seen as one of the main reasons that many shop-owners and restaurant holders moved

into the nearby alleys on both sides of Shida Road. The government tried to establish this area as a residential area, but the arrival of the Mandarin Training Center, a language institution established in 1956 as a part of the nearby National Taiwan Normal University for foreigners learning Chinese (NTNU Office of International Affairs 2009), complicated matters. Its growing popularity in the 80s and 90s gave rise to a wave of foreign students frequenting this region between class hours and after class. This in turn caused small-time entrepreneurs to see this region as a viable market for foreign tourism, and started to flock to the area to establish Western style restaurants, cafes, bakeries, etc.

From the 1990s to mid 2011 the Shida Night Market greatly increased in size, as did the selection of shops available in the area. Clothing boutiques started so spring up in the alleys surrounding Shida Road and claimed even more space for the still growing night market. Up until 2011, with the founding of the residentially led Shidahood Association (師大三里里民自救會), it was still one of the most promoted business areas by the government and tourist agencies alike (Yang 2012). Shida Night Market was even included in various TV programs and movies, including *Au Revoir Taipei* (Yi 2010). On March 25, 2010, Taipei city mayor Hau Lung-bin (郝龍斌) even visited the area in an effort to promote business there (Shida Shangquan 2010).

The most important thing to highlight here is that there have been shops in the region for a long time, and newer shops that came flocked to the region followed the example of the older shops in establishing themselves with regards to interior and exterior. Furthermore, the expansion of the night market from somewhere between 400 and 500 shops in 2009 to 700 shops in 2012 naturally caused a great changes in residential environment in the area (Chen 2012, 3). Because many of these shops did not fit into the area cordoned off for business they started moving into residential areas, which is permitted, but requires different rules to be met. For one, these shops may only operate along roads that are six to eight meters wide, which was not met by many stores in the narrow alleys (ibid.). This rule was however never strictly enforced before in this area or other areas in Taipei, but in 2011 the government decided to act. This came as a shock for many business owners in the area who had in some cases been in constant violation of this rule for over 15 years without ever knowing of it before that point (Frazier 2012b). Even the chairman of the Shidahood Association, Jerry Liu (劉振偉) wondered, when interviewed, why the government took so long in upholding its own regulations (ibid.). In this paper I would like to argue that this hesitation on the part of the government is due to the constant struggle between upholding tradition and the

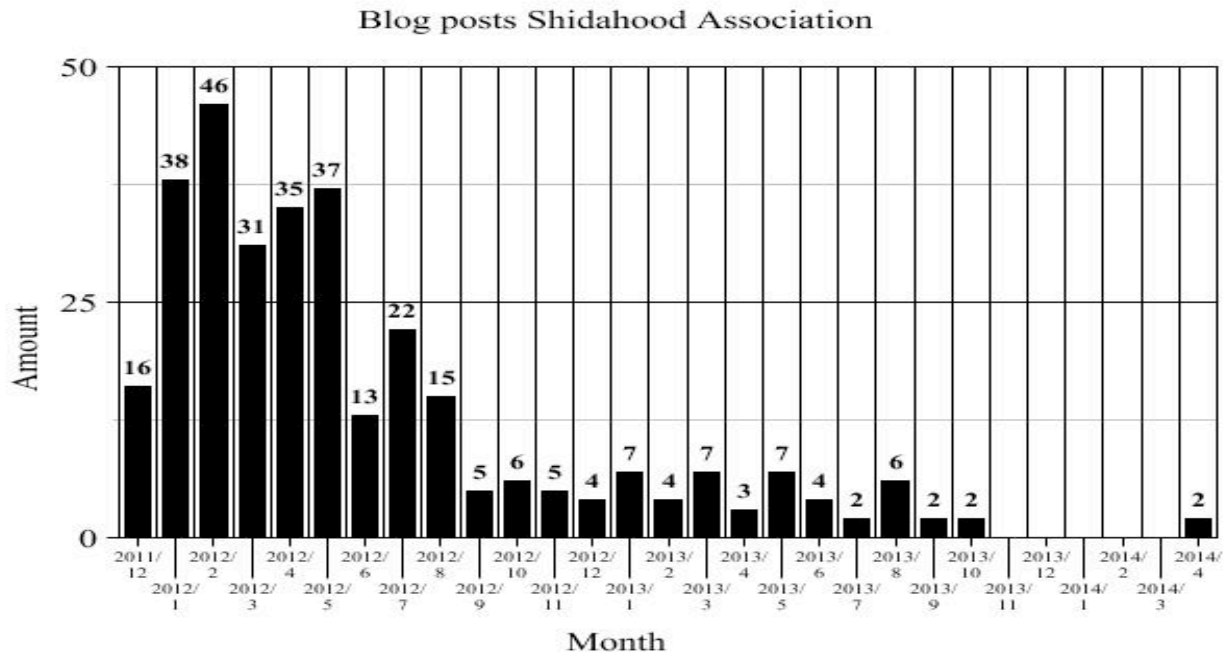
cultural/economic benefits that can be gained from maintaining the night market, versus furthering the modernization goals of the city and the benefits that can in turn be gained from that. It seems that the government has long seen both sides as important, but, as highlighted by the two cases in this paper, has recently become more intent on a form of modernization, even if this means cutting down on night market activity.

I will further explore the handling of this dilemma in the next part of this chapter, with a more detailed timeline of recent events directly concerning the closing down of large parts of the night market, and the framing attempts influencing events.

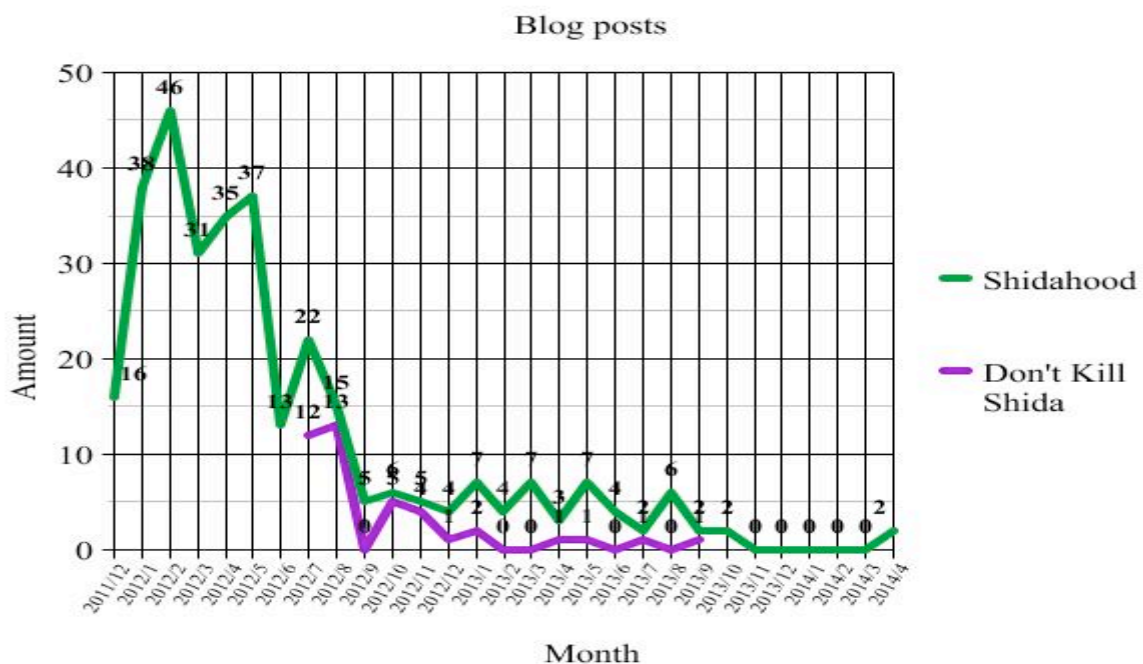
3.2.2 Framing over time

After the brief history of the Shida Night Market given above I will now turn to the events that occurred between the end of 2011 and the status quo that is still in place today, but which started around the end of 2012. I have mainly used articles from the English-language newspaper Taipei Times to construct the timeline of events. This newspaper is published by the Liberty Times Group, a pro-Taiwan independence editorial, making its coverage potentially biased towards measures taken by the current KMT government. However, in this matter it is more enlightening to get a critical viewpoint from the media and separate fact from fiction based on deeper knowledge obtained from the blogs. Furthermore, in order to predict policy outcomes, media like the Taipei Times also show public opinion on culture, as well as contributing to the creation of culture. I will shortly introduce both blogs first, and then continue with the timeline and framing attempts.

I have used two blogs that are on opposite sides regarding the desired future of the night market as the sources of framing attempts. Both blogs are responsible for framing attempts made with regards to the dispute. The first blog is the official blog of the Shidahood Association. This blog, which can be found at <http://shidahood.pixnet.net/blog>, was started in December 2011, and currently still witnesses the sporadic addition of posts. The graph below shows how the blog's posting frequency is spread out.



As can be seen from this graph, the busiest period was between the start of 2012 until the summer of that same year, which coincides with the rise of a strong counter-frame, as well as the founding of the second blog used in this paper, Don't Kill Shida (不要殺了師大路), which is a blog set up by residents with a different view from the Shidahood Association and businesses, and can be found at www.dontkillshida.blogspot.tw. Although this second blog has a much lower post frequency, which can be seen in the second graph below, the rise of a strong counter-frame in this blog in the months June and July in particular played a crucial role in the ongoing events at the time.



In selecting relevant posts from both blogs, I first read and translated all the posts added to both blogs from beginning to end, and based on the frames I established before, I selected posts based on their connection to one or more frames. This has led to a relatively large portion of posts from the Don't Kill Shida blog being used because many posts on the Shidahood Association blog were records of shops being shut down and reminders of meetings etc. Below the sequence of framing is ordered chronologically with the framing attempts made by the Shidahood Association coming first, followed by the counter-frames given in the Don't Kill Shida blog. This paper will describe only the side with the strong framing attempt, excluding posts made during that time by the opposing side. Following these selection criteria, the final number of articles containing clear framing attempts on the Shidahood Association blog is 34 out of 238 (with the total posts on the blog being 319), and for the Don't Kill Shida blog this is 18 out of 41 entries.

3.2.2.i Start of the conflict (October 2011 – November 2011)

Before moving on to the section of this paper dealing with both the timeline and framing attempts, there is a short period of time in which both blogs did not exist yet. I would like to argue that the start of the clash between residents and shop-owners began during this time, in October 2011, with the aforementioned extreme growth in activity in the Shida area, and the subsequent founding of the Shidahood Association on October 26. The complaints and meetings this group organized quickly drew attention from the government, and in response to mounting pressure from this association the city government formed a “Special Shida Taskforce (師大專案小組)” led by the deputy mayor Sherman Chen (Yang 2012). One of the first things to happen was an announcement by the government that further expansion of the Shida Night Market would not be permitted, and that shops that were in violation of the aforementioned street width rule would be fined (“Hau says no further expansion” 2011). This is also the first time the discourse “quality of life” can be found in the Taipei Times, in sentences such as “Hau’s decision came after strong opposition from local residents, who accused businesses in the area of adversely impacting their quality of life” (ibid.). Interestingly enough, the article also makes mention of the enormous tax revenues that were gathered in this area, which clearly shows the economic importance of the businesses as well (ibid.). This article was published before the founding of both blogs, but it is clear that there were communications between the Shidahood Association and the government before the founding of the Shidahood blog. The private nature of these communications has hidden them

from research in this paper. However, the next sections of this chapter will deal with news articles published at the same time as blog posts being added, so attempts at framing are shared with the general public, allowing me to connect the two for the rest of the timeline. A sure sign of communication before the founding of this blog can be found in posts made shortly after the Shidahood Association blog was founded, and at later meetings. Every time there is a meeting between the city government and residents an earlier vow to protect the citizens is repeated (shidahood 2011, December 19; 2012, March 15; May 2). At the same time the vendors' self-help association continued protesting, but under the illegality frame described below, their bargaining power was low (Mo 2012b).

The next sections of this chapter will also be chronologically ordered, and during this timeline a pattern of framing will become clear in which four frames are apparent. Both blogs are responsible for two framing attempts each: usage of a master frame related to the protection of culture and tradition, and a collective action frame related to the questioning of integrity of respectively businesses and the Shidahood Association. Although the two frames used by each side are used at the same time to some extent, the timeline will show how one frame becomes more frequently used than the other over time.

3.2.2.ii First master frame – Quality of life (December 2011 – June 2012)

Between the end of 2011 and February 2012, the government cracked down especially hard on an alley off Shida Road with many foreign restaurants in it. Furthermore, the two Taipei subway stations closest to the night market both had Shida Night Market listed as a highlighted destination on their maps, but were forced to remove the name due to increased pressure by the Shidahood Association (Mo 2012a). At this time, there was also increasing pressure by the Shidahood Association. Many of the posts made on the Shidahood Association blog were aimed at the government, who in their eyes was not strict enough in enforcing the law (shidahood 2011, December 19; December 24; 2012, January 3; January 31; February 3; February 11). Interestingly, according to news reports during this period businesses also voiced increased criticism against the government for its lack of communication and debate on the issue, as well as asking why only Shida Night Market was being targeted and why this only became an issue now (Mo 2012a; Chung 2012). This shows that at the time, the government was under pressure from both sides using similar arguments but for different purposes. During this period the Association also used a proposed project by NTNU for a walking zone through the Shida Night Market in order to criticize the way in which the businesses and NTNU in this case forgot about the people living in the area, and

their right to good quality of life (shidahood 2011, December 26; 2012, January 16; January 23; January 29). This shows that the organization was capable of using the quality of life master frame in different situations but all working towards the same goal of returning the quality of life to the neighborhood, and as a result ridding the area of illegal businesses. Due to the rising narrative fidelity of this frame it could be used with multiple cases as long as the relationship between the frame and the effects of the case were made clear to the public.

In March the vendors' protests continued while there were also increased efforts by them to follow regulations (Mo 2012b). Meanwhile, the government reaffirmed its stance due to pressure from the Shidahood Association, with a spokesman for the city government stating that "the city's goal of maintaining a safe and quiet environment for residents remained and while the vendors' pledge to maintain a clean and quiet environment was welcomed, it would not affect the city's plan in handling the issue" (Mo 2012a). At this time the government was meeting with the Shidahood Association frequently, but was largely ignoring protests by the shop-owners. The leverage the Shidahood Association had over the government in this respect lies in the framing of the protesting businesses as illegal, and thus not deserving of communication (shidahood 2012, February 19; February 24; February 26; March 3). By constantly repeating this argument the Shidahood Association was able to frame the businesses in a way that kept them away from the negotiating table (Mo 2012b). This is what this paper would like to describe as a movement-specific collective action frame. In this specific case, by framing the businesses as illegal, which a significant portion strictly speaking is, this frame obtained a high level of empirical credibility. Furthermore, this frame became a part of the master frame in the Shidahood posts, namely that of quality of life. As said before in the online news article by Mo (2012a), the illegal businesses were shunned because the government would do what it had to do to guarantee a clean and quiet environment for the residents. However, at first the master frame, quality of life, was still not being used to its full potential, because it was not linked to the preservation of culture in general. In other words, the narrative fidelity of this frame or relatable feeling by the public could still be further enhanced. Framing the businesses as illegal and thus negatively affecting this quality of life became a part of the master frame.

This is precisely what the Shidahood Association managed to do during this month, increasing the strength of the quality of life master frame. By linking the destruction of their quality of life to the destruction of culture in general, the Shidahood Association managed to increase the feeling amongst its readers and media that Taipei's culture in general was being harmed (shidahood 2012, March 8; March 11; March 15; March 23). In these articles the

authors describe how true culture is the quiet neighborhood life that the Shidhood Association stands for, as this type of neighborhood was already visible in the area since the Japanese occupation of Taiwan, and the night markets are destroying this environment. This connection to culture may seem like a small one, but by making this an issue of culture, the Shidhood Association managed to combine empirical credibility, which they already had, with a strong sense of narrative fidelity, which resonated with a larger audience.

3.2.2.iii Transition phase – Weaker framing and rise of a counter-frame (June 2012)

However, suddenly during the peak of reception of this master frame, the Shidhood Association reverted back to using their movement-specific collective action frame. Instead of continuously reporting on the destruction of culture, the Shidhood Association resumed reporting on individual cases of illegal shops being closed down or coming under scrutiny (shidhood 2012, April 2; April 14; April 22; May 6; June 10; July 1). As stated before, the empirical credibility of this frame is high, but because it deals with individual cases its narrative fidelity is weaker because the frame resonates with less people. As can be seen from the blog posts above, the Shidhood blog continued with this type of blog posts over the next few months, well into July.

The stance of the government seemed to shift at this time, with the Taipei City Government announcing that it would soften its stance somewhat, and would “only target vendors that seriously violated noise and air pollution regulations” (Mo 2012c, 1). The rule that was the most important for deciding the fates of many businesses set up in the residential area surrounding the Shida Night Market, namely the required six meters width rule, was no longer strongly enforced as long as noise and air quality were deemed acceptable. Taipei mayor Hau Lung-bin (郝龍斌) stated: “The effort to form a consensus between residents and vendors will continue, and we expect the solution to serve as a model in handling similar cases at other local communities in the future” (ibid., 1). Although this move was welcomed by many shop-owners, some other vendors and residents wondered how the government could justify the constant shifting of its position (ibid.). Again, the dilemma the government faced and still faces could be seen shining through the complicated situation unfolding in the area.

This sudden change in the attitude by the government can be seen as an attempt to maintain the balance between shutting down illegal businesses and thus securing the quality of life for residents and keeping the night market running. If the six-meter width rule had been enforced without exception, almost no businesses situated in the residential alleys would have

been allowed to stay open, seriously harming the night market as a whole. By relaxing this rule all shops could be regarded on a case-to-case basis thus giving the city government wiggle room in implementation. If the quality of life master frame had been used continuously, this type of response would have been difficult been possible because the city government would have had a hard time legitimizing any communication with the businesses in the area. However, now with the loophole provided by Shidahood Association, the government could take action against illegal businesses on a case-to-case basis. Although the framing attempt is not directly responsible for this change, the weaker framing attempt placed a lower level of pressure on the government.

Two other aspects further strengthened the rise of a counter-frame. The first is a number of posts addressing the question of bias by the government. This question had been around for some time (Mo 2012a; Chung 2012), but for some reason the Shidahood Association decided to address the matter at this time, making the question seem legitimate (shidahood 2012, May 28; June 3). The other, and most important change during this time was to extend the movement-specific collective action frame to include live houses, or live music venues in general. This started in May when the Shidahood blog made mention of the park in the area being constantly filled with litter. Although this argument was made before in other posts, the difference was that it was framed as a result of people hanging in the park after going to clubs in the area. Specific mention was made of live houses, although the neighboring live house, Underworld, was not mentioned by name (ibid., May 16). This was however the start of a recurring argument made in July saying that live houses were part of what was destroying culture in the area (ibid., July 15; July 20). Excluding live houses in this frame's definition of culture turned out to be problematic, as the next section will show.

3.2.2.iv Second master frame – Protecting night market culture (June 2012 – October 2012)

The months June and July of 2012 are particularly relevant for this paper and the ongoing battle between what culture means and how its definition was contested. On 11 July the Taipei Times reported that the Shidahood Association had targeted the rock club Underworld, which is located on Shida Road. Threats relating to closure had been made before, and after an arduous process the club had been given a special certificate from the Council of Cultural Affairs declaring it “an important space for artistic and cultural performances” (Frazier 2012a, 3). This shows that the club had been framed in different ways throughout the past, finally having its status as cultural site confirmed.

The existence of cultural policy framing the status of Underworld, as well as the new attempts to frame the club in relation to the Shida case proved to be a problem for the Shidhood Association. The Shidhood Association had claimed that the illegal businesses were new to the region, and that real culture was embodied by a quiet residential neighborhood that had existed before these businesses moved in (shidhood 2012, February 26). The same could not be said for Underworld however, which had been a part of the neighborhood for more than 20 years, and was furthermore located in the business area of the neighborhood. So legally the club was able to make a stand where many other businesses could not.

The problems for the Shidhood Association were further exacerbated by the popular support the club got from many famous Taiwanese bands that had played there in the past (Loa 2012). Because of the status given to the club by the government, it was possible for fans and other residents to legitimately frame the club as a cultural site where much big stars of the Taiwanese music industry had their roots. It was at this point that the club thus went from being framed as a symbol of destroying culture to being a symbol of promoting culture.

When the owners of the club as well as rock fans, band members and other supporters went to a national forum organized by the Ministry of Culture on July 19, this ministry had to address the worry of these people that culture was being destroyed. The Don't Kill Shida blog, which had just been established at this point was quick to pick up on this frame, and published a number of posts within a matter of days framing the club as a marker of the strong music culture in Taiwan (dontkillshida 2012, July 21; 2012, July 30). These posts talked about Underworld specifically, but also about live houses in general, and about how these clubs lead to greater diversity in society (ibid., July 21). This mounting pressure led to the Taipei City Department of Cultural Affairs Commissioner, Liu Wei-gong (劉維公), calling these clubs, or live houses "a valuable cultural asset" (Yi 2012), and promising action to protect this type of venue. This led to the temporary reopening of the club in August 2012 (dontkillshida 2012, August 12). The live house did however announce its permanent closure on its website a year later due to the landlord not renewing the club's lease under pressure from the Shidhood Association (Underworld 2013).

Even though Underworld did end up closing, the framing attempts surrounding the club changed public opinion. The issue started to receive even more coverage in media, and foreigners and locals increasingly used the word *culture* in an attempt to pressure the government against the closing-down process (Frazier 2012c). An example of this is the

foreign author of eight Lonely Planet guidebooks, including the ones on Taiwan, “urging the government to protect the people and culture of Shida” (ibid.). This framing attempt both had a high narrative fidelity and was also empirically credible. On the one hand, because many people supported the club, and because famous bands claimed that the club had influenced them, people saw the club as important. As said before, the club was also seen as a symbol of culture, making the narrative fidelity of this frame powerful. The destruction of culture and individuality that is part of this frame speaks to a greater public due to the long-standing issues that have been apparent throughout Taiwan for a longer period of time. The Shilin case described in this paper is one example that this frame could use, with another example being the Wenlin Yuan case,¹ which is related to urban development (dontkillshida 2012, October 1). Making use of these examples are part of what made this framing attempt so empirically credible, because news had been reporting on these cases for an extended period of time, making the frame accessible to a larger public.

In August this part of the master frame was used to great effect, and also went hand in hand with a movement-specific collective action frame used by the Don’t Kill Shida blog. The Shida vendors alleged that there was an ulterior motive to the pressure the market was receiving to close certain areas, namely development plans for the area (Mo 2012d). Interestingly enough, these plans had been online on the website of the governmental Urban Regeneration Office since 2009, but were discovered and made part of the framing attempt at this time (www.uro.taipei.gov.tw). Vendors and groups of residents were quite angry with the Shidahood Association at this point for its apparent lack of communication or will to find a compromise (dontkillshida 2012, July 22; August 20). These plans also showed to the people that the Shidahood Association may not have been focused with defending culture, so much as replacing “old” houses with “modern” buildings. The actual development plans, or the goals stipulated therein were no longer relevant, seeing as the damage to the credibility of the Shidahood Association and government had been done. The Shida area was now linked with the ongoing problems of urban development in the whole of Taiwan. Within the master frame of protecting culture, urban redevelopment was framed as one of the driving forces behind the destruction of culture. The Urban Renewal Act, which had caused numerous unsolved cases at this point, was and is very unpopular among the general public (Hsu 2012), and by placing the

¹ This is a case concerning urban redevelopment in which a family refused to vacate their house that was going to be torn down in favor of a proposed project. The house did eventually get torn down, but legal proceedings have been ongoing for a number of years. This is one of a number of similar cases in which it is possible for the city government and construction companies to gather a majority vote in favor of renewing an area, leaving a minority that does not want to move with little to no legal standing.

Shida case in the urban redevelopment category the case suddenly became a part of a structural problem, increasing the amount of people influenced by the frame's narrative fidelity. The government did not know how to react to this framing attempt, which can be seen from a news article detailing a discussion of a municipal report on urban development with the opposition. The article reports that the problems in the Shida area were also raised, and were not met with satisfying answers according to the opposition (Mo 2012e).

The urban development problem and the secrecy surrounding communications between the government and the Shidahood Association led to the rise of a movement-specific collective action frame, which was derivative of the master frame. The urban development scheme gave opponents of the Shidahood Association, including the Don't Kill Shida blog the room to question the credibility of the Shidahood Association. The link between various members and urban development was emphasized (dontkillshida 2012, July 22), which in turn led to multiple aspects of the organization coming under scrutiny. For one, the Shidahood Association had always presented itself as the representative organization of the residents, but the Don't Kill Shida blog questioned this, and called the association undemocratic or even oligarchic based on the account of a former member of the organization (ibid., July 23; November 7). The blog also made entries claiming that the Shidahood Association's original purpose of evicting illegal businesses from the area was no longer true, as the organization was attacking businesses regardless of their legal standing (ibid., August 7; August 10; August 11; August 20). This claim could be made as a part of both the master frame and the movement-specific collective action frame because Underworld had shown that legal businesses were also being attacked (ibid., October 24).

3.2.2.v Status quo (November 2012 – May 2014)

The government had to constantly deal with pressure stemming partly from strong framing attempts connected to different ideals throughout the events of the Shida case. This led to the mixed response highlighted above. However, this paper would like to claim that a frame is capable of maximum pressure as long as it has an audience to relay that pressure onto the government. The rise of a Shida Community Development Association quieted protests from both sides to some extent (ibid., November 9; November 15; December 3). This new association may be the key to starting negotiations, but for now both sides are locked in a status quo that does not yet have a solution in favor of either side, and the conflict is thus not over. This is also due to the Shidahood Association accepting nothing other than all the illegal businesses leaving the area and not being open for compromise. Every vendor that is removed

from the area is an individual case, and because there is no room between staying and moving out, a status quo seems inevitable. The government also has a hand in the status quo, as each time the master frame of one side gave way to weaker resonance due to losing support the government was able to step in and placate both sides with some form of support that did not really further goals of either side. Furthermore, during the later stages of this case other internationally relevant events arose that claimed the attention of the media, such as the Senkaku-Diaoyu Islands Dispute and the US beef scandal. These events, which seized media attention, may have diverted attention from the Shida case, leaving the actors in this case without an audience. The government benefits from less attention on this case, because it can continue to mediate between the two sides without media attention driving it to take action in some manner.

However, as is the case with many of Taipei's Urban Redevelopment cases as well, a status quo happens primarily because both parties cannot find a solution together to solve the problem. Both sides are in their right to some degree, also according to the law, and the government does not have sufficient power to bring a conclusion to these cases. Because these cases are being linked to the definition of Taiwanese identity and culture, solving the cases is loaded with extra tension that became especially apparent when the master frames found greater resonance with a larger audience. It is possible that these cases have become so difficult to solve because it is not just about solving these cases, but about defining the appearance of the nation. The effects of framing these cases in this way is not clear, but we can see from the description of framing above that this link to culture was utilized because it was clear that this type of framing attempt would find a high level of resonance with the intended audience of the frame. The next chapter will take the four frames described above apart, and show how their narrative fidelity and empirical credibility led to different levels of resonance amongst the audiences of the frames.

4. Frame Resonance

This paper has distinguished between four frames, two master frames and two movement-specific collective action frames. In order to elaborate on the resonance of these frames this chapter will shortly reiterate each frame, and comment on each frame's narrative fidelity and empirical credibility. It will show how these frames gained more resonance or lost this resonance based on various aspects highlighted above, as well as other factors.

First I would like to address the master frame and movement-specific collective action frame apparent in the Shidhood Association's discourse. They appeared close together and strengthened each other. The master frame "Quality of Life" came first, and immediately found resonance with residents in the area and people elsewhere who were also concerned about their neighborhoods. By framing the government as slow and uncooperative at first, the frame gained resonance with a larger part of the Taiwanese public who feel that the government is not as responsive as it should be. The narrative fidelity of this claim is high, as many people feel that the government is indecisive. Besides this first point, the image of a quiet and peaceful neighborhood was linked to a type of neighborhood present in Taiwan during Japanese rule. Although this period in Taiwan's history is generally perceived as negative due to being colonized, Japan did modernize Taiwan (Hwang 2006, 112), and brought about the type of neighborhood framed by the Shidhood Association as desirable (shidhood 2012, March 11). By bringing this past experience back, the Shidhood Association could also frame this type of neighborhood, and even modernization as a part of Taiwanese culture and tradition. This was another aspect that increased the narrative fidelity of the frame. By bringing the past into this frame, it also became related to identity. As Stuart Hall said, "national cultures construct identities by producing meanings about 'the nation' with which we can identify; these are contained in stories which are told about it, memories which connect its present with its past, and imagines which are constructed of it" (1996, 613). The Shidhood Association made the Shida case one of those stories, and connected a memory of the past, which was seen as good, with the picture of the present that was seen as tainted.

Not long after this frame came into existence, the movement specific action frame "Illegal Businesses" strengthened the master frame by adding to its empirical credibility. By framing the businesses as solely illegal and thus not deserving of communication, the Shidhood Association could claim to speak for the neighborhood and the safety of all its inhabitants. By combining the two frames, the Shidhood Association found strong resonance

with a larger audience. However, as stated during the case study chapter, later the Shidahood only used the movement-specific collective action frame, which has strong resonance with the area due to high empirical credibility, but not so much with other actors in the rest of Taiwan due to lower narrative fidelity. By using this frame alone, resonance decreased, as did the narrative fidelity of the frame for people not living in the area. This movement-specific collective action frame also included live houses at this point, which brought a different group of people, or imagined community up against it.

The strike against Taiwanese music culture, as it would later be framed gave room to business owners, residents in favor of the night market and other parties to strike back. The “Protecting Night Market Culture” master frame had a chance to gain footing due to the attack on live houses. Night markets, as well as live houses were framed as symbols of culture, and creative individuality and thus deserving protection. The destruction of culture and individuality that is part of this frame spoke to a larger audience, finding resonance. The narrative fidelity of this frame, and its resulting resonance lies in the idea that Taiwan as a whole was modernizing at the cost of losing its uniqueness. The long-standing idea that the KMT government is slowly moving towards Mainland China adds to the idea that protecting Taiwanese culture is necessary to differentiate between the two based on more than just territory (Hwang 2006, 117). This political and historical reason resonated with a large audience, giving the frame power. Because of the emotional aspect of this frame, the movement-specific collective action frame shown above was also largely ignored.

Just as was the case with the Shidahood Association’s movement-specific collective action frame, the “Questioning Credibility” frame added to the empirical credibility of the master frame “Protecting Night Market Culture.” By questioning the motives of the Shidahood Association, and showing how their vision of the neighborhood actually meant tearing down old buildings and increasing the value of their property, empirical credibility was added to the already strong narrative fidelity of the master frame, further increasing the resonance of the frames. This frame also linked events to urban redevelopment, another longstanding issue in the whole of Taiwan, also giving this frame narrative fidelity when combined with the master frame “Protecting Night Market Culture.”

However, just as was the case with the Shidahood Association, using this movement-specific collective action frame alone resulted in a decrease of resonance and support, as the emotional discussion about culture was abandoned, leaving the frame with only empirical credibility and less narrative fidelity. Every time one of the master frames was shelved, the government found a way to negotiate the situation. Although this did not solve the dispute, it

did give the government chances to please both parties to some extent, keeping the status quo in place.

From all this we can conclude that the master frames were particularly effective when their resonance was high. This in turn occurred when, on the one hand a sense of historical belonging and protecting tradition was utilized, and on the other hand when the frame spoke to a larger issue in Taipei or Taiwan as a whole. Both the historical reason and the issue related reason have high narrative fidelity, because a sense of belonging or being excluded results in the creation of an imagined community on both sides of the argument. The past and present are framed in certain ways, and as Hwang says, “Taiwanese identity does not derive from what *actually* happened in the past, but how people in Taiwan *interpret* their ‘past’” (2006, 119). Framing is thus part of identity formation, and that in turn is related to creating an image of the nation, and nationalism that is required to do so. The next chapter will dig further into the discussion on nationalism that was started here.

5. Discussion

The discussion chapter of this paper will take the description of resonance in the previous chapter as a way to talk about nationalism more in general. This chapter will take a step back from the night market cases, and talk about the creation of nationalism in imagined communities that are shaped in part due to the frames highlighted above. This chapter will also show how identity formation occurred in the cases and gave certain discourse precedence over other alternatives in a way that Taiwan's different historical, cultural and political discourses make possible. The two aspects of resonance in the case highlighted above, namely history as a model, and present problems are both part of identity formation and nationalism, and will both be discussed in this chapter.

5.1 Using the past to create resonance

Firstly, as highlighted above, the master frames in the Shida case incorporated past experiences to construct new ideal images of the area, city and possibly country. The way in which these master frames work is thus indeed related to meaning construction, and how framing can contribute to the definition of a situation (Gamson and Modigliani 1989). Culture is an abstract concept that can be defined in various ways, as can be seen in the Shida case. Framing it in a certain way has contributed to the definition of the neighborhood, and the definition of city culture. As said before, associations between an issue and a broader phenomenon, in this case culture, can suggest new perspectives that change our perception of reality (Van Gorp and Verduyn 2012, 1275). On both sides of the Shida case a master frame found high resonance among a larger audience. The previous chapter has shown what parts of discourse within the frames found high resonance, and this chapter would like to build on that to talk specifically about the relation between the past and present within these frames.

The Shidahood Association has tried to use culture as a way of opening up discussion on the quality of their neighborhood. Using the perceived positive aspects of Japanese rule, namely modernization and breaking away from traditional Chinese feudalism, the Shidahood Association could find high resonance because Japanese rule over Taiwan is seen as a part of history that has greatly influenced Taiwanese identity, and night markets are excluded from this image by framing them as part of this uncivilized traditional culture that Taiwan was freed from. Japanese colonial rule has become a part of "Taiwanese consciousness", whereas in this frame the night markets are perceived as being a part of "Chinese consciousness"

(Ching 2001, 7). In this context Japanese colonial rule can be used as a part of Taiwan's unique identity because it is something that is no longer present and dangerous to Taiwanese nationalism itself. Japan has no (mainstream) outstanding desire to retake Taiwan such as is the case with Mainland China, allowing for the use of Japan in nationalism discourse. As Ching says: "Despite, or precisely because of, the tumultuous relation between colonial Taiwan and mainland China, there is a disconcerting but commonly held impression about Taiwanese reactions to Japanese colonialism. Unlike the Koreans, who vehemently detested and tenaciously opposed the Japanese and their colonial occupation, the Taiwanese are said to have retained a fairly positive image of the Japanese and recollected approvingly the virtues of Japanese rule. If the Koreans speak of oppression and resistance, the Taiwanese speak of modernization and development" (ibid.). It is this modernization and development that is being highlighted here. The use of, and success in using Japan in this frame show how complex Taiwanese identity is. Because of the large influence both China and Japan have had on Taiwan, it seems that identity is to a large extent articulated between these two essential sides, in politics as well as in cases like the one discussed in this paper (ibid., 194). In this view, modernization is defined as something that started during Japanese rule, and entails the building of a newer city to replace the old traditional buildings, and thus adding to Taiwan's culture. In this view the city is viewed as a place where people should be able to live quietly together in peace, without all the noise that is normally attributed to countries in Asia. Recreating Taiwan with this ideal in mind is something that people in this imagined community are also proud of, because it makes Taiwan appear more civilized in their view, as is the case with similar modernization projects that have occurred throughout Taipei (Lee 2007, 34).

As discussed before, besides the Shidhood and their master frame related to a shared history with Japan, the other side in the dispute also managed to create a master frame that found resonance with the same unique Taiwanese culture as its main pillar. In this view, culture was instead defined as the presence of night markets, and the continued existence of this type of merchant in the cities. In this case Taiwanese identity is linked to an image of tradition and food culture that is often echoed by tourists. At the same time, night markets are also part of what is framed as making Taiwanese culture special, and in the framing attempts associated with this view they are seen as part of what gives Taiwan a different identity from China, even though night markets also exist elsewhere, including Mainland China (Yu 2004, 132). However, in this frame, echoing a view that is prevalent in Taiwan, the existence of night markets elsewhere is conveniently ignored. This turned out to be unproblematic due to

the way in which the frame was set up. It is precisely the feeling of *renao* (liveliness) that was described in chapter two that is so important here, for in the master frame that became clear on the Don't Kill Shida blog, the concept of *cultural intimacy*, as coined by Michael Herzfeld in 1997 becomes apparent. This is defined as “the recognition of those aspects of a cultural identity that are considered a source of external embarrassment but that nevertheless provide insiders with their assurance of common sociality” (103). So although the night markets may not embody modernization as sought after by the government and the Shidahood Association, they are still considered a national trait that “offer citizens a sense of defiant pride in the face of a more formal or official morality” (ibid.). This sense of defiance became especially true when the Shida Night Market problem became related to the loss of *renao* in the form of Taiwan's bustling alley culture, and later even music culture and individuality in general. In the case of Taiwan, it is not the presence of night markets itself that make those who would place themselves in the imagined community formed by the second master frame feel like Taiwan is the same as Mainland China, even though night markets may also be present there in a form that is similar to those in Taiwan. Instead it is the removal of the night markets by the government, which is framed as a “dismissal of local renditions as conservative survivals” (Herzfeld 1997, 107) that is likened to current modernization techniques in Mainland China. The fear here is that by removing the night markets from Taiwan, cities all over the island will become empty modern units void of *renao* in the form of physical buildings and a more emotional feeling of uniqueness.

And so, in the second master frame highlighted in this paper, if night markets were to disappear, unique Taiwanese culture would disappear with it, leaving Taiwan with nothing to differentiate it from the Mainland. Seeing as night markets are not actually uniquely Taiwanese, the view in this paper is that this frame creates an imagined community of those trying to find unique features of Taiwanese culture that differentiate it from Taiwan's communist counterpart. Modernization is here thus defined as finding the balance between giving the city a more modern appearance while retaining the specific cultural and traditional values that make Taipei (and possibly Taiwan) unique in the eyes of its citizens. The creation of this imagined community was highly successful, as can be seen from the degree of resonance found within this frame, as its boundaries do not just include those who care about the fate of the Shida Night Market, but also those who care about the loss of culture to state-driven modernization. This thesis would take this even one step further, and include in this imagined community those who feel that Taiwan must maintain unique traits if it is to

somehow differentiate itself from Mainland China in the eyes of itself, Mainland China, and the rest of the world.

Interestingly enough, both these definitions of Taiwanese identity are attempts to shape Taiwan as a nation, and are both placed politically on the side of Taiwan as a separate entity from China. As said before, using Japan in this discourse is possible because Japan no longer has the desire as a nation to claim Taiwan as its own, so the shared history between Japan and Taiwan can be used as a unique feature of Taiwan's history that has shaped it in ways that differentiate it from the Mainland. On the other side, using the Mainland is even made possible in the second master frame as a way of creating fear that the destruction of culture that is perceived as happening in the Mainland will also occur in Taiwan.

So although both sides in the Shida conflict are on opposite sides in how they would like to see Taiwan develop, it is clear that unique Taiwanese culture and identity is being pursued in both master frames, based on different parts of past experience. Both sides have thus managed to use the word "culture" as a way to define their side as correct, as well as create an image of what Taiwanese identity means. This image fits perfectly with the definition of cultural nationalism, as given by Nielsen. According to Nielsen, "cultural nationalism defines the nation in terms of a common encompassing culture. The aim of a nationalist movement is to protect, and beyond that, if it can, to insure the flourishing of the culture of the nation that that nationalist movement represents" (1999, 125). Of course nationalism is still about politics, but in this definition of cultural nationalism, culture is assigned more importance, and in the case of Taiwan it is mostly culture that differentiates it from the Mainland, so it is that much more important in framing attempts to highlight this as it will find greater resonance.

5.2 Structural Problems

Secondly, this paper would also like to say something about the resonance of the master frames with relation to other structural problems plaguing the country. Although this paper has not gone deeply into this topic, the position of rule of law in Taiwan is intimately related to the case studies of this paper. The findings in this paper suggest that the implementation of the law is selective, and this begs the question what rule of law means to the Taiwanese government, and if Taiwan really is a country with full rule of law, as it claims to be. This is part of the first master frame in the Shida case, where inconsistency by the government is mentioned. This inconsistency is a part of larger problems with corruption, land reform, urban redevelopment and other issues that the second master frame "Protecting

Night Market Culture” also uses. The recent Sunflower Movement in Taiwan² also shows that there is deep-seeded distrust towards some aspects of the government, and its handling of cases like the Shida case creates imagined communities of people that question the authority and sincerity of the government. Rule of law and democracy are two aspects of Taiwanese politics that differentiate it from the Mainland politically, and are things that people that associate themselves as Taiwanese are proud of. If these two pillars of Taiwanese society are perceived as lacking, it leads to unrest as we saw during the Sunflower Movement. Unfortunately this paper does not have room to go into detail over democracy and rule of law, so further research is needed there.

² This movement lasted from March 18, 2014 to April 10, 2014 and was a student-led protest movement against the passing of a cross-strait trade agreement between the KMT and Mainland China without a clause-by-clause review occurring. The protest was aimed at the government due to the lack of communication surrounding this agreement, and as a result students occupied the Legislative Yuan for a period of six days before being evicted.

6. Conclusion

In this MA-thesis I have attempted to show how Taiwanese night markets became a battlefield for different definitions of Taiwanese culture. The two cases described in this thesis have helped to show how framing in one case can bring attention to certain aspects of the case, and help bring negative impact to a side in the conflict to a standstill. On the other hand the lack of framing leaves a project uncontested in media, and the lack of any strong counter-movement gives the government sufficient space to control a situation. The difference in outcome between the two cases in this paper cannot be attributed solely to framing attempts, but framing certainly influenced the amount of media attention given to each case, and helped create resonance with a larger audience in the Shida case. This resonance and resulting attention leads to the government treading lightly when making decisions regarding this case or any other case in which framing is apparent.

When looking at both cases it becomes clear that the Shilin case did not witness the rise of a master frame, a comprehensive frame that spoke to a larger audience. This may be due to various reasons, including the government's framing attempt at making the renovation and relocation project seem as something that would improve the quality of environment for the shopkeepers. It was only later that this frame was contested, but by this point it was too late to change anything, and people ended up accepting the relocation. Although specific aspects of this case may have caused it to be viewed differently than the Shida case, it is still clear that the lack of a counter-frame gives the government relatively free rein over a case.

The Shida case did witness the rise of two such master frames, both related to the definition of culture in Taiwanese society. Culture could be framed as quiet city life, a remnant of Japan's modernization drive during its rule of Taiwan, or as the availability of night markets as a unique trait of Taiwanese (food) culture. Both definitions of culture incorporate the idea that Taiwanese culture is unique, and that Taiwan's past has added features to the cities that are now part of tradition. It is precisely because these frames gained strength over time, that legitimizing any action that would change the night market was framed as the destruction of culture in both master frames. This made it difficult for the government to act, and this is also partially why the case has not been resolved as of yet.

The two master frames managed to gain resonance to the extent that other people that were not related to the case in any practical sense also felt a connection to the case, creating an imagined community of people in favor of protecting the night market, and another community that wanted to guarantee the safety and quality of their own living environment,

be it in the Shida area or elsewhere. Both sides were also poised against the government to some degree, because the government's previous framing of night markets is inconsistent. In the period before 2011 night markets, including Shida Night Market, were framed as important additions to Taiwan's food culture and tourism, but this definition was later changed to exclude Shida Night Market specifically.

Throughout this MA-thesis it has become clear that the Shida case was a local case, but was framed as something bigger. Defining culture in Taiwan is not just a matter of defining the self, but also part of what defines Taiwan as different from Mainland China. It is precisely because Taiwan's political parties and public are split over what Taiwan's future should be, that framing attempts incorporating an image of identity find greater resonance. Framing in the Shida case was thus not just a matter of local politics, or culture in general, but was an effort by both sides of the dispute to define the nation, even if this was unconsciously done. Cases like the Shida case show how the struggle to define identity in Taiwan is apparent in all layers of society, and appears in cases that may seem unrelated to it at first glance.

Although it was not possible within the scope of this paper, it would be interesting to see how cases like the Shida case relate to Taiwan's democracy and rule of law, two other aspects that are seen as part of what makes Taiwan unique. Further research is needed into this subject, as well as into how a local case with framing is dealt with in Taiwanese local politics. In any case this thesis has shown how framing attempts incorporating definitions of culture and identity in Taiwan can find great resonance due to the importance prescribed to defining identity amongst the general Taiwanese public.

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